Recently Returned:

Live with the Librarians Summer 2019

# S01E04 Transcript

[Start of recorded material at 00:00:00]

Anita: [0:00:03] Hi. Welcome to Episode 4 of “Live with the Librarians.” We’re here at Point Cook Library this evening, and I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we’re recording tonight’s episode, the people of the Kulin Nations, and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.

My name is Anita and I’m joined this evening by some of our librarians. I have Anu, Jess and Lachlan. And yeah, we’re here to talk about some of reads, our summer reads, and hopefully hear from you; we’re keen to get your recommendations. What are you currently reading? What are you [0:00:33] looking forward to reading? And if you have any questions for our panellists post a comment and we’ll get to them later on.

So, yeah, I’m interested to hear, Anu, what are you currently reading?

Anu: [0:00:45] Well, the book that I’m reading currently is Anne Enright’s ‘The Green Road.’ So, she is a very famous author; she has won the Man Booker Prize for one of her novels. This one is set in Ireland and it is about a family, the story of a family. It’s narrated from a third-person perspective, and there are five narrators, so, you get to hear the story from the [0:01:15] perspective of these five characters, and it’s a mother and four children.

One interesting aspect of this story is the fact that that even though normally you would assume when one of the characters is narrating their story the next person would be saying something that happened in that same timeframe, but it doesn’t happen like that. So, if one story happens in this year, so the next one will be in [0:01:45] 10 years’ time.

Anita: [0:01:49] So, it jumps quite a bit?

Anu: [0:01:51] Yeah, it jumps the time. But I guess it will all make sense in the end.

Anita: [0:01:55] Is it making sense now?

Anu: [0:01:57] Yeah, it’s okay. Yeah, I’m finding it...

Lachlan: [0:01:59] It’s a journey of discovery.

Anu: [0:02:00] Yeah. And yes, so you should be on-track. Like I feel that this should be read as in one go because there’s a lot of information presented. And I like her style of writing because she describes everything; the Irish landscape is described so beautifully and it’s described a lot that I feel that the landscape itself is a character. And probably it is in a way because it shapes the main characters’ attitude towards life, their experiences [0:02:30], et cetera.

So, there are two parts for the story; Part 1 is leaving and Part 2 is coming home. So, Part 1, like it’s about the past, so when they were all growing up or at some stage in their life, and coming home is when they all go back to their home and it’s Christmas time and they all go [0:03:00] to see their mother who thinks that all the kids have abandoned her also.

Anita: [0:03:06] Oh, wow.

Anu: [0:03:06] And the mum is trying to sell the family home. And then probably all the five perspectives and what happened to them it will all make sense and some conclusions might be reached. I don’t know, I guess; it’s a good read. It’s interesting. But just keep in mind the fact that you know there’s so much information so you just have to read it in one stretch otherwise you will forget what happened to this character.

Anita: [0:03:31] What’s happening? Kind of lose the thread because they’re in the five threads; you might lose ... yeah.

Anu: [0:03:36] Yes. It’s the story of the Madigan family. Sorry, I didn’t say who it was about. The children of Rosaleen Madigan and one boy and three girls.

Anita: [0:03:47] Great.

Lachlan: [0:03:49] Are you enjoying it?

Anu: [0:03:49] Yeah, I’m enjoying it. And ‘The Green Road’ apparently it’s a road that’s actually there in Ireland.

Anita: [0:03:59] Okay. So, if you’ve been to Ireland you might recognise it and recognise where the book is set?

Anu: [0:04:03] Yeah, that’s true.

Anita: [0:04:04] That’s always nice; I like reading books where I know I can picture that place and “Oh, I’ve been there before” and I can see that character, or my imagination of that character walking down that street. It’s really nice.

That’s great. Thanks, Anu. How about you, Jess, what are you currently reading?

Jess: [0:04:18] So, I’m reading ‘Toil and Trouble’ by Augusten Boroughs. I was actually drawn to this book because I read ‘Running with Scissors’ also a memoir by him.

He’s got a really engaging writing style and I think that’s what I’m drawn to most about him as a writer. He’s had a really interesting childhood. So, a bit of background about him [0:04:48]. He lived with his mother for a period of his childhood and then he was essentially sort of palmed-off to his mother’s psychiatrist and there was a lot of sort of interesting happenings as he was growing up living with that family.

So, I was drawn to ‘Toil and Trouble’ because he gives an account of himself being a witch [0:05:18], which I thought was a really interesting concept. At the moment I’m really enjoying his writing style; he’s a really good storyteller. He’s very sort of outlandish, gives lots of really good details. But yeah, I almost feel that even though he is recounting things that have happened in his life I feel like he’s possibly also a bit of an unreliable narrator [0:05:48]. So, I don’t know how much of it I’m feeling is truthful and how much is embellished. But it’s a really interesting read so far. And it’s on audio book and it’s read by him, and he’s also got two other people that are also doing different voices, which I have found to be really engaging so far.

Anita: [0:06:16] How is he doing? I sometimes find when books are ready by the author they’re sort of too close to the story and especially if they’re not of a performing background; they kind of don’t do it justice. How is he doing because that’s not his background?

Jess: [0:06:29] Yes. I read ‘Running with Scissors’ as a physical book but I also listened to it as an audio book and I do believe the audio book is narrated by him as well. And he just – yeah, he’s very larger than life when he reads so it actually works quite well, and for this title it works quite well for the subject matter as well.

It does at the moment – I’m feeling like hopefully it will sort of come together, but there’s some details [0:06:59] that he’s given that feel a bit, I guess, tangent like at the moment. But I have a feeling he’s setting-up something to be drawn together later, so I’m going to stick with it and see where he takes us.

Anu: [0:07:15] It’s very interesting when the author reads it.

Jess: [0:07:17] Yeah, especially with the addition of having – so, he’s got another voice actor to play his mother and it’s really nice to hear that, that just difference in narration.

Anita: [0:07:34] It would have been awkward if he was trying to do his mum’s voice.

Jess: [0:07:37] Yeah. I feel like him as an author he would do it though.

Anita: [0:07:40] Yeah. Yeah, possibly.

Lachlan: [0:07:41] First there’s tragedy then it’s farce.

Jess: [0:07:43] Yeah, yeah.

Anita: [0:07:45] Well, thanks for that, Jess. And Lachlan, what are you reading at the moment?

Lachlan: [0:07:48] Right. Well, Anita, what am I not reading I think is the easiest question to answer? So, I’ve got quite a few things on the go at the moment. I’m one of those readers who just has a lot of books on the go.

So, in print at the moment I am working my way through a biography of Shirley Jackson, the American horror writer, writer of one of the great ghost stories ‘The Haunting of Hill House.’ This is a prize-winning biography of her by Ruth Franklin. I’m enjoying it. But I like some variety in my reading, so I’m [0:08:18] also working my way through ‘The Education of an Idealist’ by Samantha Power.

Samantha Power was Barrack Obama’s appointee as US Ambassador to the United Nations. A very interesting read so far.

But the thing that I’m really into right now is actually an audio book and it’s on eaudio, so it is on our BorrowBox platform, so there we go, so the BorrowBox. Available in the App Store, free to download, and [0:08:48] yes, lots of ebooks and eaudio available from Wyndham City Libraries.

So, the thing that I’m enjoying at the moment is called ‘Melmoth’ which is a rather creepy book actually by Sarah Perry, and as the lights switch off and darkness encroaches I think indeed that it’s time for us to talk about some darker works.

So, basically ‘Melmoth’ is a book that mixes supernatural fiction and historical fiction. It’s set in present day Prague and [0:09:18] the protagonist is a woman named Helen Franklin who’s a British expat living in Prague with many dark secrets to keep. And she keeps very few friends and she is drawn into this intrigue around a figure called Melmoth, Melmotta, or Melmotka, the witness.

So, look, I’m halfway through and I don’t want to give too many spoilers. I’m halfway through but we’ve hit [0:09:48] kind of a malaise, so the mystery is mostly poised at this point. But I don’t care enough about any of the characters at this stage.

Anita: [0:09:56] Oh, no!

Lachlan: [0:09:59] So, I’m wondering whether I’m going to finish it or not. Look, I probably will; I want to know what happens. But the protagonist is written in a very unsympathetic way, which is think has been done to achieve a point. But anyway, that’s a thing that I’m enjoying at the moment.

And I’ve also just started a book called ‘Bone China’ by Laura Purcell, which is available in an ebook on our BorrowBox platform, and that is set in the early Victorian era and it again is about – it mixes historical and supernatural elements again.

Anita: [0:10:37] All right, it sets a theme now.

Lachlan: [0:10:37] Yeah, it sets a theme.

Anita: [0:10:39] A lot of reading.

Lachlan: [0:10:39] As the weather warms up my reading you know cools down, quite chilly. So, yeah, there are moments of visceral roar and horror at the start of ‘Bone China.” So, I’m enjoying it already. Thank you. There we go.

Anita: [0:10:53] No, we might need to ... because Kirsty and I recorded the horror podcasts and this will also be available on podcast as are our previous episodes of ‘Live with Librarians.’ And we talked about that supernatural sense that you get from horror fiction as opposed to the jump scares that you get from horror movies.

Lachlan: [0:11:11] Yeah. You can get jump scares in some horror fiction.

Anita: [0:11:13] Can you?

Lachlan: [0:11:14] You can.

Anita: [0:11:14] I’ve never had a jump scare.

Lachlan: [0:11:15] But it’s got to be done really well.

Anita: [0:11:17] I guess. I’ve been surprised by a horror; I’ve been like, gasped; I’ve definitely gasped but never had that same like jump, squeal that I sometimes get in horror movies.

Lachlan: [0:11:27] I’ve got some recommendations for you, Anita.

Anita: [0:11:29] Oh, okay.

Jess: [0:11:31] Beware.

Anita: [0:11:33] Yeah, I know. Maybe. Yeah. That’s great. So, thanks for that, Lachlan, and for bringing the prop of the BorrowBox, which does have a great range.

Lachlan: [0:11:40] Yes, it will reoccur; it will reappear.

Anita: [0:11:42] Yes. Well, we can tell where Lachlan finds his reading. So, that’s great. Well, Anu, did you want to talk about something that you’ve read recently that you’ve enjoyed?

Anu: [0:11:50] Yes. So, this is something I am really fascinated by because I really like this book. The book that I recently read is ‘The Thing Around Your Neck.’ It is by Chimamanda Adichie. And this is a collection of 12 short stories and like all the stories have different themes but there are like some similar elements that run through all the stories. One is the fact that either the story takes place in Nigeria or in America [0:12:20]. And another common factor is that out of the 12 short stories 11 stories are told from the perspective of a Nigerian woman.

I feel like it deals with a lot of different things like loneliness, then insecurities, then the after-effects of the Nigerian Civil War on the characters in the novel, then like depression. There are like [0:12:50] lots of different topics that are handled here. And what struck me most was the way she writes. She’s makes storytelling to be a simple process; it’s like an art. And I feel that like because it’s short stories I didn’t feel that you could get so deep into each character, but she does that with ease. And I feel [0:13:20] if I make an analogy, I feel that after you read a couple of pages she opens a small window and you can peer into the soul of each character; it’s that beautiful.

Anita: [0:13:31] Yeah, wow. Yeah.

Anu: [0:13:33] Not all the stories are that great but some are you know a standout. And out of these the ones that stand out for me in ‘The Thing Around Your Neck;’ that is what the title is about, and it’s about a Nigerian woman who goes to the US in search of the American dream and she doesn’t realise her dream; she goes through a lot of hardships. And the thing around her neck actually symbolises her struggles [0:14:03], the feelings that she has for her motherland; she’s neglecting – like she doesn’t have too many connections with her family, so the guilt. So, she’s not fitting in. So, that’s the discomfort I feel. In my interpretation I feel it’s a discomfort, that’s the thing around her neck. And then finally she goes back to her place.

And then there is another beautiful story about a Nigerian woman who is a poor woman who marries a rich man [0:14:33] and like he gives her everything; he looks after her family and he’s a good husband and they have children. And then he moves them to the US. And then it was a struggle for he to fit in first but then she fits in. But then he becomes a visitor to their family, and he’s a powerful man. But then she gets these insecurities and she learns soon that he has got a mistress back in [0:15:03] Nigeria.

And so the way the author puts it out there is like it’s not explicit, so the feeling of betrayal that the woman feels, she just goes to the bathroom and chops off her hair and she finds herself, because she’s indebted to this man, but still she finds herself. She understands that she has her own voice, so it’s like woman empowerment or something.

Anita: [0:15:31] Yeah. Like a real self-discovery of...?

Anu: [0:15:33] Yeah, self-discovery. So, it’s all put beautifully. And it ends in a beautiful way.

And then there was another story that’s completely a different theme that’s about sibling rivalry, and it was shocking and disturbing to me.

Anita: [0:15:49] Oh, wow.

Anu: [0:15:50] It was just a very small story but I never thought that you know it was going to that level. I’m not going to say the story because it’s very interesting, and how far somebody is ready to go because of the sibling rivalry. So, that’s like it’s portrayed very well.

Anita: [0:16:14] It sounds great.

Jess: [0:16:14] I think I’ve seen a TED talk by her called ‘The Danger of a Single Story.’

Anu: [0:16:20] Yeah, ‘Single Story.’ Yes.

Jess: [0:16:21] Yes, she’s a really good speaker as well.

Anu: [0:16:23] Yes, she’s a really good speaker.

Jess: [0:16:25] Yeah, a brilliant woman.

Anu: [0:16:25] Yeah. She calls herself “The happy feminist” or something.

Jess: [0:16:29] Yeah.

Lachlan: [0:16:29] She also wrote ‘We Should All be Feminists’?

Jess: [0:16:30] Yeah, ‘We Should All be Feminists.’ Yeah.

Anita: [0:16:32] ‘We Should All be Feminists.’ Yeah.

Anu: [0:16:32] Yeah.

Lachlan: [0:16:33] It’s a fabulous little book, isn’t it?

Anita: [0:16:35] Yeah, very little. Yeah.

Jess: [0:16:35] Is that an award-winner as well?

Anita: [0:16:36] I read it on my lunch-break once.

Lachlan: [0:16:38] Yes.

Anu: [0:16:38] She wrote ‘The Half of Yellow Moon;’ that became a big success.

Yeah, so I recommend this to anyone who is...

Anita: [0:16:46] I keep looking at your hands because the book is so little -

Anu: [0:16:49] Yeah, it is.

Anita: - like it’s not very big. And like everything you’ve described.

Anu: [0:16:51] It’s an easy-read.

Anita: [0:16:52] But like she’s – like so many things in there.

Lachlan: [0:16:54] So many stories, so many lives.

Anu: [0:16:55] Yeah. And she gets straight to the point; there’s no dilly-dallying, just gets straight to the point. But there is some depth as well, so that’s what I like. And it’s an easy-read, and if you don’t like one story you can skip to the next story.

Anita: [0:17:05] Move on. Short stories are good for that. I used to read a lot of short stories and I haven’t in a while, and I think you’ve inspired me to go back.

Anu: [0:17:11] Uh, that’s good.

Lachlan: [0:17:11] Pick it up again.

Anita: [0:17:12] Because, yeah, you’re right, they don’t waste time; you don’t have time, you don’t have pages, so it’s...

Anu: [0:17:17] Yeah. Sometimes you may not like one story, you skip it, you just read another one.

Anita: [0:17:21] Yeah, less commitment.

Anu: [0:17:22] Yeah.

Anita: [0:17:23] Perfect for summer reads. You know, one drink a story. Perfect.

Anu: [0:17:28] Yeah. And this book is available in ebook as well, yeah, through our BorrowBox.

Anita: [0:17:33] Great.

Lachlan: [0:17:34] Fantastic.

Anita: [0:17:35] Fantastic indeed.

Lachlan: [0:17:36] We like our BorrowBox.

Anita: [0:17:39] Thanks, Anu. How about you, Jess, what have you read recently?

Jess: [0:17:42] So, I listened to on audio book ‘Braving the Wilderness’ by Brene Brown. I listened to this at home while I was doing other things. I think one of the things I really like about audio books is you can still get really immersed in a story or a book -

Anita: [0:18:02] That’s true.

Jess: - but you can also ... it’s just a different way of experiencing stories. And I was just doing some housework and I just remember walking about the house going “Whoa! [0:18:12] Yikes! Oh!” So, it’s one of those books.

Lachlan: [0:18:18] Was that related to the book or the...?

Jess: [0:18:20] Yes. Yes. No, it’s not related to my cleaning. Yeah, it’s related to the book. I loved this and I also hated it. So, I...

Lachlan: [0:18:32] It’s a common response to Brene Brown; it’s just something I’ve noticed.

Jess: [0:18:34] Yes. And from what I’ve read of the criticism for this book and some of her other books I actually agree with a good portion of the criticism for this book.

So, it’s about standing alone and being radically vulnerable and the idea of belonging and connecting with others despite differences. And there’s a lot of really great themes there. And I feel like in this book [0:19:04] if she had just stuck to that and perhaps expanded it a bit more it would have been more effective. But she brings in quite a lot of other ideas and I think what was a little bit jarring for me was to introduce the idea of belonging she talks about her own experience of not belonging but she does it from the perspective [0:19:34] of someone who is quite privileged, but she doesn’t seem to acknowledge that privilege.

So, one of the things that sort of took me out of even just the first portion of it is she describes the feeling of not belonging because she has what she perceives as a black-sounding name and doesn’t get invited to a lot of her white friends’ birthday parties because of what she perceives as a [0:20:04] black-sounding name. And placing herself on the outside in a lot of different ways but connecting them to things that I feel like she ... it’s a little be tone-deaf in places; well, I say it’s a lot tone-deaf in places. I get the idea and she’s got really good ideas but the way they’re explored it just kind of misses it.

So, she talks about showing up for [0:20:34] moments of collective joy and collective pain and she also talks about things like connecting with others even though you disagree. She does talk about obviously you need to keep yourself physically safe if you are talking to someone who has very radically different ideas and she does touch on minorities not being safe in some circumstances. But she does sort of give the [0:21:04] idea that you should push through that in a way that I don’t think takes into account emotional safety and also perhaps that not being a good thing.

Lachlan: [0:21:21] I think one of the main things with Brene Brown is that some of the ideas that Brene Brown puts forward are so powerful, they’re so useful.

Jess: [0:21:31] Yeah.

Lachlan: [0:21:32] But a lot of her written work is very uncritical and there’s no...

Jess: [0:21:36] Yeah.

Lachlan: [0:21:37] So, obviously she’s been very successful; Oprah Winfrey is a great champion of Brene Brown’s writing.

Jess: [0:21:42] Yeah.

Anu: [0:21:43] I didn’t know...

Anita: [0:21:44] Yeah.

Anu: [0:21:44] I’ve never read any books by her.

Lachlan: [0:21:47] Yeah. So, things like “I Dare to Lead” and ideas around “Leaning into discomfort;” all of these come from Brene Brown.

Anu: [0:21:55] So, she’s an American author?

Lachlan: [0:21:56] Yes.

Jess: [0:21:57] So, what drew me to this was that she talks a lot about researching and doing a lot of research into belonging and loneliness and vulnerability and one of the things that I saw is she was sort of saying, “Have the uncomfortable conversations.” And that’s what drew me and a lot of the praise for the book drew me [0:22:17]. And then I listened to it and then I was like “Oh, some of this isn’t quite sitting right with me.”

I wouldn’t say, “Give it a miss” but yeah, let us know what you think if you read it. But some of it just was a bit “Oh, no.”

Anita: [0:22:38] Well, it sounds like she has valuable things to say but you almost need to bring that critical perspective yourself and that awareness.

Jess: [0:22:45] Well, I would have liked her to have added in minority voices to the conversation especially when she was talking about things like race relations and stuff like that. I think placing yourself as a sort of middle-class straight, white woman, saying that you have experienced exclusion to the point of associating it with minority experiences I don’t know whether that’s .. I get what she’s trying [0:23:15] to say; it’s just not landing.

Anita: [0:23:18] It just sounds a bit more...

Jess: [0:23:19] Yeah.

Anita: [0:23:20] Fair enough.

Lachlan: [0:23:21] Hashtag opinions, please?

Jess: [0:23:22] Yeah. Hashtag. Yeah.

Anita: [0:23:25] Indeed. Thanks, Lachlan. Yeah, straight to Lachlan. There we go.

Lachlan: [0:23:26] No worries. Hi everybody. So, here’s what I’ve just finished reading. So, each year – I’ve got a go-to book that I try to re-read each year. I don’t always get to it. If I don’t get to it it’s not a tragedy; you know I’ll read it again next year.

Anita: [0:23:43] There’s always the year after.

Jess: [0:23:45] Yeah, to make up for it.

Lachlan: [0:23:47] Yeah, I have to make up for it. So, this is something that I have re-read this year and I think this is about the eighth year I’ve re-read this, ‘Gaudy Night’ by Dorothy L. Sayers.

So, Dorothy L. Sayers was – in my opinion – one of the greatest of the golden age detective fiction writers, writing in English. So, she began to write the Lord Peter Wimsey mysteries in the mid-1920s. ‘Gaudy Night’ is about number eight or nine in the series published [0:24:17] in 1935; I think I have made notes. Yes, written in 1935. And in my opinion it’s one of the best in the series. It is a beautifully written evocation of university life.

So, the central concept of the novel is ... and I’m just going to read it from the back because they pay people to write these.

Anita: [0:24:43] Yes.

Jess: [0:24:43] Yeah, yeah.

Lachlan: [0:24:44] “So, Harriet Vane has never dared to return to her old Oxford College. Now, despite her scandalous life, she has been summoned back. At first she thinks her worst fears have been fulfilled as she encounters obscene graffiti, poison pen-letters and a disgusting effigy when she arrives at sedate Shrewsbury College for the Gaudy celebrations. But soon Harriet realises that she is not the only target of this murderous malice and she asks Lord Peter Wimsey to help.” Great set-up. And look, beautifully written; I love [0:25:14] the prose.

Written in 1935, so there are moments of casual racism and classism which, in my view, are getting harder to look through when I read them. But each time I read it I find more to appreciate in the book. So, yes, ‘Gaudy Night,’ just finished it for number eight, the eighth time I think, and it was fantastic.

Another thing that I’ve just finished – this isn’t actually it – but I’ve just finished [0:25:44] ‘A Dark Adapted Eye’ by Barbara Vine. Barbara Vine is one of the pen names of Ruth Rendell, the late, great crime writer. So, this was first published in 1986.

This is ‘A Fatal Inversion’ which is the second book written by Ruth Rendell as Barbara Vine.

So, ‘A Dark Adapted Eye’ is a psychological thriller, so it was a departure for Ruth Rendell stepping away from procedural crime. But it develops very rapidly; things around [0:26:14] family misunderstandings and the side-effects of keeping secrets and this kind of stuff. And it’s really well-written.

For me, ‘A Dark Adapted Eye’ is a great introduction to Ruth Rendell even though it was published as a Barbara Vine book. Some people find Rendell a bit stand-offish when you’re trying to get into her. But yeah, ‘A Dark Adapted Eye’ is a great way just to start in that particular [Unintelligible]. So, yes, I enjoyed it immensely.

Anita: [0:26:47] I’m curious. I just want to ask with the Dorothy L. Sayers -

Lachlan: [0:26:50] Yes?

Anita: - why that one in particular over her others?

Lachlan: [0:26:54] For me it’s...

Anita: [0:26:54] Or like do they need to be read in an order or could you just...?

Lachlan: [0:26:58] Actually that’s a really good question.

Anita: [0:26:58] Yeah. Like I’m curious.

Lachlan: [0:27:00] ‘Gaudy Night,’ so it is written as a Lord Peter Wimsey mystery but the protagonist is Harriet Vane, and Harriet Vane is essentially Dorothy L. Sayers. So, I’m probably overstating it or over-simplifying it, but Harriet Vane is written as a beautifully sympathetic character and her development throughout the book is extraordinary and really ‘Gaudy Night’ is her story. And the craftsmanship that Sayers shows in this book is really fantastic. So, I recommend it just as, you know, [0:27:30] a piece of wonderful English language writing.

Anita: [0:27:34] So, like a stand-alone?

Lachlan: [0:27:35] Yeah.

Anita: [0:27:35] So, you don’t need to have...

Lachlan: [0:27:37] No. Look, there are references to what has happened and that’s sort of a necessary precondition to the relationship between Harriet Vane and Lord Peter Wimsey but the work stands on its own feet really.

Anita: [0:27:51] That’s good because it can be a bit intimidating with those writers that have written big, long series.

Lachlan: [0:27:55] Yes.

Anu: [0:27:55] Yeah. So, this is part of the series?

Lachlan: [0:27:58] It is. It’s about – I think it’s number eight in a 13-book series.

Anu: [0:28:01] Uh, okay.

Anita: [0:28:02] It’s good that you’ve read it eight times.

Lachlan: [0:28:04] Oh!

Jess: [0:28:05] Uh, there you go.

Lachlan: [0:28:05] And it goes to 64. I don’t know where to go with that actually.

Jess: [0:28:09] Another mystery.

Anita: [0:28:09] No, me neither. It just sort of stuck in my mind though. Thanks. No, because I’ve always seen Dorothy L. Sayers but never quite known where to start.

Anu: [0:28:18] Yeah, I also haven’t read her.

Lachlan: [0:28:19] Yeah. And if you’d like ... so, it’s not a classic detective story by Sayers. So, I have ‘His Carcass’ and ‘The Nine Tailors’ are actually two fabulous detective stories by Dorothy L. Sayers, in the Library collection as well. So, I really recommend you give it a go. She has had a bit of a resurgence. I don’t know if she’s ever been out of print, but they’ve recently been republished.

Anita: [0:28:42] Yeah, those editions there.

Lachlan: [0:28:43] Those new deco sort of style covers.

Anita: [0:28:45] Yes, they look really nice; they’re a lot more attractive. Probably increase them flying off the shelves.

Lachlan: [0:28:48] Yeah, absolutely.

Anita: [0:28:50] Great. Thanks, Lachlan. And Anu, I know you’re looking forward to some of these here. Do you want to tell us about what you’re looking forward to?

Anu: [0:28:56] Yeah. Yeah, definitely. Like Lachlan and like many others here I also read at a time two or three books.

Jess: [0:29:03] Yeah, I guessed it.

Anu: [0:29:05] So, I’m planning to hear this memoir by Olivia Newton John ‘Don’t Stop Believing’ and it’s read by the author; I always like memoirs read by the authors.

In the previous “Live with the Librarians” I mentioned that I was going to read Michelle Obama’s ‘Becoming.’ And I read it. I heard it basically and it was a beautiful experience because she is the narrator. So, I feel like with this book also I will get such a similar experience because she is the narrator and I’m curious to know more about this powerful, kind and courageous woman. Yeah, iconic star.

Anita: [0:29:44] She is. Yeah.

Jess: [0:29:45] Yeah.

Anu: [0:29:45] So, that’s one book I’m looking forward to listening to. And this is one book I am planning to read. This is called ‘I am Change’ by Suzy Zail. So, I don’t know much about the book but from what I saw – I read the blurb and what is written here – it kind of attracted me to it.

This is also kind of a feminist book. I don’t know why I choose...

Jess: [0:30:13] And another YA.

Anu: [0:30:14] Yeah, it’s a YA book as well.

Lachlan: [0:30:16] It’s got a great cover.

Anu: [0:30:16] So, it’s a popular book.

Anita: [0:30:17] It does have a good cover.

Anu: [0:30:18] Yeah. So, the title itself ‘I am Change’ that itself speaks volumes about the book. I’ll read something that’s written here that will give you an idea of what it is about. It’s about Ugandan women and I think the author went and talked to many women and from their experiences she formally did this story.

Anita: [0:30:38] Story. Yeah.

Anu: [0:30:39] Yeah. So, what’s here is that “They told her that her body belonged to men and her mind didn’t matter. They were wrong.” So, it’s about a strong woman who comes forward because education was denied to the women there, and she fights her way forward and attains probably what she wants. So, I like to read about such strong characters.

Anita: [0:31:01] Yeah. It sounds really powerful.

Anu: [0:31:04] Yeah. So, these are the two books that I’m looking forward to reading.

Anita: [0:31:08] Great. Thanks, Anu. What about you, Jess, what are you looking forward to reading?

Jess: [0:31:12] So, Anu was talking before about short stories and things like that. I’m going to try for a shorter piece of fiction, so I’m going to read a novella called ‘Every Heart a Doorway’ and it’s by Seanan McGuire. I don’t know whether that’s how you say it.

Lachlan: [0:31:31] Yes, Seanan McGuire.

Jess: [0:31:33] So, I was drawn to it because I have spoken at previous “Live with the Librarians” and do quite like fairy tale retellings and different perspectives on a lot of older myth and fairy tales. So, that’s what drew me to it. But also I’m feeling a lot of like Ransom Riggs sort of vibes from it.

So, essentially it’s about [0:32:03] a place where all of these children are and they’re sort of slowly disappearing. And from the impression that I get there are some narratives of traditional story tale/traditional...

Anu: [0:32:17] That’s interesting.

Jess: [0:32:19] Yeah.

Anu: [0:32:19] Whether the children understood.

Jess: [0:32:20] Yeah, like a different take on some familiar...

Anu: [0:32:22] So, it’s not happening in the current time, present time?

Jess: [0:32:25] No, apparently it is. Yeah. Yeah -

Anu: [0:32:27] It is.

Jess: - from what I’ve seen it is. So, I’m interested in how that can be explored in like a novella because that to me is quite a short sort of medium to explore what looks to be a bigger idea. But it also looks a bit fun as well. So, you know I think it will be...

Lachlan: [0:32:44] And if you don’t like it there’s not much to read.

Jess: [0:32:45] Yeah, exactly. So, it’s something...

Lachlan: [0:32:46] Sorry.

Anita: [0:32:47] No commitment. The short story; no commitment, high return if it’s a good one.

Jess: [0:32:50] Yeah.

Anu: [0:32:51] Yeah. And harder to write short stories I think.

Jess: [0:32:53] Well, that’s why a lot of the short stories that we’ve talked about previously impress me because it is quite a hard medium to really do something powerful -

Anita: [0:33:03] Yeah, to make an impact.

Jess: - and the people that do do something powerful or do it well. I think good writing should look effortless but on closer inspection you see, like re-reading things -

Anita: [0:33:19] All the hard work.

Jess: - yeah, all the hard work that goes into it. Also this one I will be reading on audio book as well, just something nice to sort of throw on in the car -

Anita: [0:33:30] Yeah.

Jess: - when I’m driving or something like that.

Anita: [0:33:33] Yeah, it sounds great. Thanks, Jess. What are you looking forward to, Lachlan?

Lachlan: [0:33:37] Well, my TBR pile is growing by the day at the moment. But I am looking forward to something on eaudio, so I have just downloaded it actually. It’s called ‘Ghostland’ by Edward Parnell. It is non-fiction, so it’s not fiction. And it was just really the blurb that got me.

So, “Edward Parnell found himself trapped in a recurring nightmare of a family tragedy. For comfort he turned to his bookshelves back to the ghost stories that obsessed him as a boy and to the writers through the ages who have attempted to confront [0:34:07] what comes after death.

In ‘Ghostland’ Parnell goes in search of those sequestered places of the British Isles, lonely moors, moss-covered cemeteries, stark shores and folkloric woodlands. He explores how these landscapes conjured and shaped a kaleidoscopic spectrum of literature and cinema.”

So, it’s kind of a meta; a bit of a...

Anita: [0:34:27] Yeah, I was just...

Jess: [0:34:28] Mm-hmm.

Lachlan: [0:34:29] So, try and give some of my other reading a bit of context.

Anu: [0:34:33] So, you’re into horror and...?

Lachlan: [0:34:36] Not usually, no.

Anita: [0:34:37] Giving a poor – like a bad impression of Lachlan’s reading texts. If it’s according with a horror it’s fine.

Anu: [0:34:41] No, it’s a wide range of reading but probably summer reads.

Lachlan: [0:34:43] No. Yeah, you’ve got me on a bad week. But that’s something that I am actually looking forward to. Yeah, once I’ve finished ‘Melmoth,’ once I’ve knocked ‘Melmoth’ off in the car I’ll be starting ‘Ghostland’ by Edward Parnell. Again available on your BorrowBox.

Jess: [0:35:01] Audio book. Audio book, ebooks seem to be the thing.

Anu: [0:35:02] Yeah, the BorrowBox.

Anita: [0:35:04] I know it might look kind of funny but like the BorrowBox is great and like you can see a lot of us -

Anu: [0:35:09] It’s very convenient.

Anita: - read and listen and to me it’s just a way...

Lachlan: [0:35:13] And print and ebook.

Anita: [0:35:15] Yeah. And ways to like increase our reading capacity; that’s how I see it. It’s like “I want to read more; how can I do this?”

Anu: [0:35:21] And you download it and you don’t have to be in a place where you need Wi-Fi because it’ll be on your phone.

Lachlan: [0:35:25] That’s it.

Anu: [0:35:26] Yeah, it’s so convenient.

Jess: [0:35:26] And you can do sort of other things. I think a lot of people, one of the barriers for reading is that whole “I’ve got to sit there. I’ve got to have a quiet environment. I’ve got to have time.” Whereas what I like about especially audio books is I can get my housework -

Anu: [0:35:40] Yeah, that’s true.

Jess: - I can get my cooking done and can have it.

Anita: [0:35:42] I can go for a walk. I can listen in the car on the way to work -

Jess: [0:35:43] Yeah, in the car. Yeah.

Anita: - the commute and make use of that time.

Lachlan: [0:35:47] And we’ve mentioned BorrowBox a few times but of course it’s not the only platform that Wyndham City Library has. We also offer RBdigital which has got a fantastic selection of ebooks, eaudio and emagazines. And Access 360 which has also got a great selection of ebooks and a few eaudio available for you too, all free as well.

Anita: [0:36:06] With your library card. That’s right. And actually I’ve just queued up because I’ve just finished an audio book in the car on the way to work here, so I had to queue it up, ready to go home, on RBdigital called ‘The Weekend’ by Charlotte Wood -

Lachlan: [0:36:19] Oh, yes.

Anita: - who won the Stella Prize with her last book called ‘The Natural Way of Things,’ which was very good; weird but good. Have you read it; has anyone read it?

Lachlan: [0:36:30] Uh, no. No.

Anu: [0:36:31] No.

Jess: [0:36:31] I’ve heard about it.

Anita: [0:36:32] No. Weird but good. Yeah. And I have heard very good things about ‘The Weekend’ so I’m really looking forward to listening to that on the way home.

Lachlan: [0:36:38] Yeah, great. That’s fantastic.

Anu: [0:36:40] Yeah, I also read while I’m driving.

Anita: [0:36:41] Yes.

Lachlan: [0:36:43] No, you listen while you’re driving.

Anu: [0:36:43] At least I’m...

Jess: [0:36:44] You listen while you’re driving.

Anu: [0:36:46] I’m sorry. I listen. Correction.

Anita: [0:36:51] You’re noticing a theme here I think.

Lachlan: [0:36:53] Yeah, unsafe driving.

Anu: [0:36:55] Yeah.

Lachlan: [0:36:54] No, no. So, a lack of time.

Anu: [0:36:58] Yeah, listening.

Anita: [0:36:59] Yeah, enjoying. Exactly. Well, that’s great. Thanks for sharing your summer reads and what you’re currently reading and loving now. All those titles, we’ll have them in a list available on our website with links to the library catalogue and probably to our eplatforms as well since we’ve talked about them so much tonight. So, if they’re available on “e” we’ll make a note of that as well. And thanks for joining us. Hope you have a good evening and talk to you next time. Thanks. Bye.

[End of recorded material at 0:37:27]